

What is a Special Improvement District?

Special (Business) Improvement Districts are true public/private partnerships working to revitalize struggling economic communities. A SID is an organizational and financing tool used by local businesses in partnership with the municipality to provide specialized services such as sidewalk maintenance, graffiti removal, physical improvements, security, special events and holiday lighting, as well as marketing and business promotion.

In a sense, a SID is similar to a water, sewer or fire district – property owners pay an additional charge for specific services. SIDs enable downtown property owners and merchants to form a local management association with the authority to collect assessments, in turn providing a dependable source of funding for downtown improvements and a management plan for leading the revitalization effort.

Do you want to know more?

For additional information contact:

NJ Department
of Community Affairs
Division of Housing
and Community Resources
101 South Broad Street
PO Box 811
Trenton, NJ 08625-0811
(609) 292-6140



The Division of Housing and Community Resources provides financial and technical assistance to community-based nonprofit and local government agencies in an effort to improve the quality of life for New Jersey's low-income, disabled and disadvantaged citizens.



James E. McGreevey
Governor



Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner

Department of Community Affairs
Division of Housing and Community Resources
101 South Broad Street
PO Box 811
Trenton, N.J. 08625-0811

(609) 292-6140

www.nj.gov/dca/dhcr

September 2003



Special Improvement District Program

Businesses and Communities Working Together



James E. McGreevey
Governor



Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner

Greetings from Governor McGreevey & Commissioner Levin

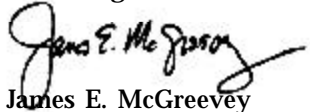
In New Jersey, our downtown business areas and the communities in which they are located truly are linked to an area's success. With a focus on investing more time and energy to re-build our communities and downtowns, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Special Improvement Districts (SID) Program can help.

Downtown business districts are vastly different than privately owned shopping centers or industrial parks because they include public property and often times adjoin residential neighborhoods. A downtown business has direct civic concerns and impacts, which influence its success.

A SID is essentially a public authority that can address private business concerns through cooperation and management. It gives municipalities the tools they need to implement programs that offer professional organization and management of downtown business areas, and right now, there are more than 50 Special Improvement Districts working in New Jersey.

Through this program, we demonstrate our commitment to moving beyond the success of individual businesses to community planning and management that can mean the success of many businesses and the entire neighborhood. Through the Special Improvement Districts Program, we are truly working businesses and communities are working together to make a better New Jersey for everyone.

With all good wishes,



James E. McGreevey
Governor



Susan Bass Levin
Commissioner

Who Governs a Special Improvement District?

SIDS are created under state law, enacted by municipal ordinance and governed locally.

Either a nonprofit District Management Association (DMA), composed of property owners, businesses and government officials, or a municipal commission governs the district. The DMA makes all decisions relating to the operation of the SID, including budgets, property purchases, annual assessments and services management.

Why a Special Improvement District?

SIDs empower private business owners and municipalities to compete more effectively and efficiently with private retail/commercial markets, especially shopping malls. Enhanced services help the business community to professionally manage and market themselves in an organized and competitive way. A SID permits private business owners and municipalities to employ the advantage of commercial management techniques in partnership with the business community.

The SID is a mechanism for partnership between the municipality and its business community. It is partnership that promotes economic growth. Governed primarily by the private sector, SIDs are designed to respond to the unique revitalization needs of specific economic communities. Who better to address the problems of a business community than the communities themselves?

What types of services are available through Special Improvement Districts?

SIDs manage a variety of community services, such as maintenance, security, parking, capital improvements, economic development, special events, marketing and promotion. Though they can support almost any type of improvement, services are designed to complement rather than replace their municipal government counterparts.

In addition, some SIDs contract with businesses to provide clean up and property maintenance services where interests coincide within a district, and SIDs sometimes work closely with developers and some even manage development projects.

Communities & Businesses That Need Each Other

There is a myth that business is solely an individual effort. In truth, most retail businesses are interdependent and thrive when they are located together and cooperating with one another. Professionally managing the common concerns of a business community is a proven, though often overlooked, foundation for success.

How to Apply

Any municipality with a well-defined business area – defined by cultural and/or physical features – may apply. Priority is given to municipalities that do not have an existing SID. Applications are accepted at any time and are subject to the availability of funds.

**For more information about the Special Improvement Districts Program,
call (609) 292-6140 or visit us online at www.nj.gov/dca/dhcr.**